

Case 2846

***Cryptophagus advena* Waltl, 1834 (currently *Ahasverus advena*; Insecta, Coleoptera): proposed conservation of the specific name**

Robert D. Pope

c/o Department of Entomology, The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, U.K.

Abstract. The purpose of this application is to conserve the specific name of the foreign grain beetle, *Ahasverus advena* (Waltl, 1834) (family SILVANIDAE), a pest of stored grain and other foodstuffs. The name is threatened by the identification of the only known syntype of *Lyctus brunneus* Fabricius, 1792 as a specimen of *Ahasverus advena*. The Fabricius name is a senior secondary homonym of *Lyctus brunneus* (Stephens, 1830), a cosmopolitan timber pest; since the species are not now thought to be congeneric and the Stephens name has never been replaced it remains valid, but the homonymy strengthens the argument for suppressing *L. brunneus* Fabricius.

1. *Lyctus brunneus* Fabricius, 1792 (p. 503) was named and described from material sent to its author by Dr Pflug, who collected it in the 'Danish West Indies' (St Thomas, St John and Santa Cruz). According to Horn & Kahle (1936, p. 208), Pflug gave all his 'Dänisch-westindische' material to Fabricius. In Fabricius's collection (the Kiel Collection) in the Universitetets Zoologisk Museum, Copenhagen, a single specimen (no. 3882; see Zimsen, 1964, p. 225) bears the name *Lyctus brunneus* and is the only known syntype. Although it conforms with the original description, I found it to be an example of the species currently known as *Ahasverus advena* (Waltl, 1834, p. 169) (family SILVANIDAE). The name *Lyctus brunneus* Fabricius has not appeared in primary zoological literature since its re-description by Fabricius in 1801 (p. 561), where a repetition of the original diagnosis and locality data was given.

2. *Xylotrogus brunneus* Stephens, 1830 (p. 117) was described from a single specimen taken from a wasp nest at Dulwich, London. The holotype is in the Stephens collection in the Natural History Museum, London. *Xylotrogus* Stephens, 1830 (p. 116), of which *Xylotrogus brunneus* is the type species by monotypy, was synonymised with *Lyctus* Fabricius, 1792 (p. 502) by Wollaston (1854, p. 152); this synonymy is now universally accepted, making *Lyctus brunneus* (Stephens, 1830) a junior secondary homonym of *L. brunneus* Fabricius, 1792. However, since the two species are not now regarded as congeneric (para. 1 above) and since Stephens's name *brunneus* has never been replaced it remains valid (Article 59c of the Code). *Lyctus brunneus* (Stephens) is a cosmopolitan timber pest, one of a small group of LYCTIDAE (powder post beetles), collectively estimated to cause several million pounds worth of damage annually. Over the years it has been the subject of considerable research outside the field of taxonomy. Since 1950 the name has been used in the title and/or text of more than 40 scientific papers, publicly available pamphlets and textbooks in Europe, America, Africa and Australia (e.g. Gay, 1953; Brimblecombe, 1961; Ito &

Hirose, 1979; Winstanley, 1987). A further 25 references, dating from 1951 to 1989, by 24 different authors have been given to the Commission Secretariat.

3. *Cryptophagus advena* Waltl, 1834 (p. 169) was named and described from a beetle found among fungi brought back from South America by a Dr Popping. It was transferred by des Gozis (1881, p. cxxvii) to his new genus *Ahasverus* of which it is the type species by monotypy. Like *Lyctus brunneus* (Stephens), it is now known to be a cosmopolitan species and is a scavenger found among cargoes of grain and other foodstuffs from Africa and Asia and ranks also as a pest of stored products. Woodroffe (1962) evaluated its pest status. Since 1950, the name has been used in more than 40 scientific papers, textbooks and publicly available pamphlets (e.g. Hill, 1965; Loschiavo & Atkinson, 1967; David & Mills, 1975; Thomas & Clasper, 1986). A further 32 references, all published after 1962 and the work of at least 29 different authors, have been given to the Commission Secretariat.

4. The nomenclatural stability of the well-known and cosmopolitan pest species *Ahasverus advena* (Waltl, 1834) is threatened by the identification of the only known syntype of *Lyctus brunneus* Fabricius, 1792 as a specimen of this species. Although *L. brunneus* Fabricius, 1792 does not threaten *L. brunneus* (Stephens, 1830) the existence of the secondary homonymy is a further argument for suppression of the Fabricius name.

5. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the specific name *brunneus* Fabricius, 1792, as published in the binomen *Lyctus brunneus*, for the purposes of both the Principle of Priority and the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Ahasverus* des Gozis, 1881 (gender: masculine), type species by monotypy *Cryptophagus advena* Waltl, 1834;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
 - (a) *advena* Waltl, 1834, as published in the binomen *Cryptophagus advena* (specific name of the type species of *Ahasverus* des Gozis, 1881);
 - (b) *brunneus* Stephens, 1830, as published in the binomen *Xylotrogus brunneus* (specific name of the type species of *Xylotrogus* Stephens, 1830);
- (4) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *brunneus* Fabricius, 1792, as published in the binomen *Lyctus brunneus* and as suppressed in (1) above.

References

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